

REMARKS

Claims 5, 7, 11-13 and 15 are pending in the present application.

Claims 1-4, 6, 8-10, 14 and 16-18 are canceled. Claim 18 is canceled with this Amendment.

Claims 5 and 13 are amended. Claim 5 is amended to recite the subject matter of canceled claim 18. Claim 13 is amended to recite the article of amended claim 5.

Claims 5, 7, 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. 5,563,023 to Kangas et al. in view of U.S. 5,112,721 to Kuchta and further in view of "Applicants' admission".

Although Applicants disagree with the Office Action's allegations, to expedite allowance of the present application Applicants have amended claim 5 to recite the subject matter of claim 18, which was objected to. Accordingly, amended claim 5 is patentable over the applied documents.

Claims 7, 11 and 12 depend directly or indirectly from claim 5. Accordingly, claims 7, 11 and 12 are patentable over the applied documents.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5, 7, 11 and 12 as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. 5,563,023 to Kangas et al. in view of U.S. 5,112,721 to Kuchta.

Claims 13 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. 5,681,676 to Tefler et al. in view of U.S. 5,563,023 to Kangas et al.

Although Applicants disagree with the Office Action's allegations, to expedite allowance of the present application the Applicants have amended claim 13 to recite the same article elements as claim 5. Accordingly, claims 13 and 15 are patentable over the applied documents.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 13 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. 5,681,676 to Tefler in view of U.S. 5,563,023 to Kangas et al.

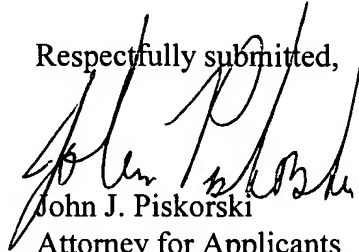
Claim 18 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 18 is canceled and the subject matter is incorporated into its base claim and any intervening claims as mentioned above.

Favorable consideration and allowance of all of the present pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner have any questions concerning this response or this application, or should she believe this application is for any reason not yet in condition for allowance, she is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned at the number set forth below in order to expedite allowance of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John J. Piskorski', is written over the typed name.

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